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# Introduction

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Traditional stories and tales have been passed on from generation to generation through word of mouth and in this book we are striving to retell them in a format suitable for KS1 children. For the purposes of this book, the term traditional stories, encompasses fables, folk stories and fairy tales.

Fables are short stories which usually involve animals, and have a specified or obvious moral. The selected folk stories are also quite short and are often amusing in tone with a less clearly defined moral. The selected fairy tales are mostly from well-known collections including Andersen, Grimm and Perrault.

The stories in this book are from countries from across the globe. Storytelling is an art that has been practised in every culture throughout history. Long before people could write, stories were told.

The main purpose of traditional stories is to teach and explain. They contain lessons about how to behave towards others, and they teach children what they need to do to achieve success. Many of these stories contain implicit (or sometimes explicit) morals and lessons.

Children reading these stories today may also learn valuable lessons about the importance of respecting others, and about the differences between cultures and religions. In addition to this, these tales and stories are often enjoyable and funny, with clever characters and amusing endings; which encourage children to develop a love of stories and reading.

On occasion, some traditional stories have fallen out of fashion. Do fairy tales teach us that passivity in females is a good trait? Do they reinforce the ideas that only boys can be clever and strong? Do they place too much emphasis on the importance of physical beauty rather than inner qualities? Teachers should be prepared to discuss and debate any unsuitable hidden messages with children, even at infant level. However, despite the fact that it could be argued that there are issues with the underlying messages of some traditional stories, these stories are almost certainly destined to remain a part of the school curriculum.

So why do traditional stories and tales have such enduring appeal? Traditional stories and tales from around the world contain universal themes. The most prominent theme is that of good prevailing over evil. They also show the importance of perseverance, striving to overcome challenges and illustrate that clever thinking can help us to master problems. Not only do these stories help us to learn, but they are also very entertaining and more importantly, children enjoy hearing and reading them.

Centuries ago, children were being told the very same stories that we share with our children today. This tradition is likely to continue well into the future. It is fascinating to consider that the traditional stories contained in the pages of this book will probably be told to children across the world for many years to come.

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# How to Use this Book

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This teacher resource book contains fables, folk stories and fairy tales from many countries around the world. It is a very flexible resource and is suitable for use in literacy lessons. The stories and activities are also ideal for use in shared and guided reading sessions. In addition to these uses, teachers might find the stories useful for assemblies. Many of the *Follow-up Activities* have links to other curriculum areas, such as science.

Each story is accompanied by:

- A section containing ‘Words to Discuss Before Reading’
- A ‘Speaking and Listening Activity’ to be used after reading
- Follow-up Activities
- Differentiated ‘Reading Tasks’ listed from A to D.

Teachers should judge whether they think the reading level of the text is suitable for their pupils. If not, they may choose to simply share and discuss the story with the children and support them with the associated activities. Some stories are more complex than others.

Many of the fairy tales are longer than the selected folk stories and fables, so teachers may feel they need to support the children more with these. With longer fairy tales, the beginning of the story is followed by the comprehension activities. After completing the activities, there is an opportunity for children to finish the story. This is obviously particularly important for those children who may not be familiar with the story, and do not know what happens at the end. After completing the story, teachers could follow-up by asking the children to talk or write about their favourite parts, describe characters or express their opinion of the ending.

The *Words to Discuss Before Reading* section contains words the children will encounter during the story which may be new to them. Before reading, teachers should explain and discuss the meaning of these words. This will help children to build on their vocabulary and help aid their comprehension of the story.

The aims of the *Speaking and Listening Activity* is to deepen the children’s insight and to encourage engagement. The book contains a range of suggested activities which are explained in the teaching notes for each story. To increase depth of understanding, it is a good idea for pupils to do the speaking and listening activities after reading the story, but prior to doing the reading tasks.

The *Reading Tasks* are differentiated; therefore they are suitable for children of different ages and abilities. Questions are of varying styles and should be used in order to help to improve the children’s general reading and comprehension abilities.

- ◆ *Task A* activities require the children to complete or rearrange words in sentences so that they read correctly and make sense. These tasks involve straight forward information retrieval.

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# How to Use this Book continued

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- ◆ *Task B* activities are drawing tasks. Children need to be able to visualise elements from the story, refer to the text and use their imagination.
- ◆ For *Task C* activities, children need to think more carefully. There are some information retrieval questions which require the children to work more independently. There are also sequencing activities, true/false questions, matching activities and multiple choice.
- ◆ *Task D* activities require deeper thought. Activities include expressing their opinions and answering more complex questions. They may need to use inference and deduction skills and make reference to the text.

Teachers may choose to give pupils task A and B or C and D, or expect the children to complete all tasks, dependent on the pupil's age, ability and the lesson structure.

*Follow-up Activities* are varied and cross curricular. Through these activities children can extend and deepen their understanding. Teachers may choose to take a thematic approach and use the stories as a stimulus to develop work with the whole class in other curriculum areas.

Morals linked to the fables are included on the appropriate pages.